

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Much of the growth and economic development of the United States has been directly related to the expansion and technological advancement of the transportation industry. The Cochise County Airport is playing an increasing role in the promotion and development of the City of Willcox and the Cochise County area. The Master Plan has a capital improvement program that responds to the needs and desires for the short and long term aviation forecasts for Cochise County. Not only are the results of the Master Plan important but also the process which developed the results. During the 12 month study, the Airport Planning Advisory Committee (comprised of a cross section of Cochise County residents) served as a medium for assembling community opinion, spirit, and concurrence. Several public meetings were held, surveys of airport users were conducted, and presentations to the County Board of Supervisors and Willcox City Council took place.

#### **INVENTORY**

The first step in the process of the Airport Master Plan is developing the inventory. The inventory is a systematic and comprehensive data collection process which provides background information about the community and an understanding of past and present aviation factors. Airport information has been acquired which pertains to existing airport conditions as well as surrounding airport service area characteristics. An airport inspection was conducted in November, 1996 to note changes to the facility and to collect inventory data. The review included airport manager/pilot interviews, a review of airport historical records, a discussion of the information contained in previous airport planning documents compiling local regulations and ordinances, and lease agreements. Photographs of current airport facilities were also produced.

#### **CURRENT ACTIVITY LEVELS**

At present, the Cochise County Airport has 24 fixed-wing based aircraft: 22 single-engine and 2 twin-engine, and experiences about 7,000 annual operations. The airport is used by many different types of aircraft including fixed wing, rotary aircraft, gliders, and blimps. The information gathered during the study identified 30 business and government agencies using the airport. The following table show the historic and current airport activity.

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Table 1.1 Historic Aviation Activity Cochise County Airport						
Year	Based Aircraft	Local Operations	Itinerant Operations	Air Taxi Operations	Military Operations	Total Operations
1980	22	3,713	2,476	0	0	6,189
1985	23	3,749	2,714	0	0	6,463
1990	27	2,952	3,720	332	0	7,004
1995	24	4,120	4,800	0	500	9,420
Existing	24	3,021	3,800	0	500	7,321

Source: FAA 5010 Airfield Inspection Forms and BWR Corporation Field Inventory

### FORECASTS OF AVIATION DEMAND

The forecasting of any type of future activity is an art rather than a science. The development of aviation demand forecasts are conducted in two distinct phases: The analytical, followed by the judgmental. In general, past aviation activity data are examined in anticipation of identifying past trends that will give an indication of future activity. Trends in the local economy are factored into future activity levels, as well.

During the analytical process, the past trends of the aviation demand elements are extended into the future using a variety of techniques and incorporating a number of assumptions. Projections are developed by combining historical trends with various analytical procedures.

The second phase of demand forecasting requires experienced professional judgment. The analyst examines various growth projections for each demand element, studies the character of the community and how it will influence the particular demand element, and then makes a determination of the "preferred" forecast. The following shows the preferred forecasts for the Cochise County Airport.

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Table 1.2 Summary - Aviation Forecasts Cochise County Airport					
Airport Activity	1997 (Existing)	2002 (5-yr)	2007 (10-yr)	2012 (15-yr)	2017 (20-yr)
<b>BASED AIRCRAFT</b>	24	24	25	28	34
Single Engine	22	22	23	25	29
Multi-Engine	2	2	2	3	5
Business Jet	0	0	0	0	0
<b>AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS</b>	7,000	7,000	7,250	9,060	9,680
Local Operations (Total)	2,990	2,860	2,970	3,251	4,146
Itinerant Operations (Total)	4,010	4,140	4,280	4,809	5,534

### AIRPORT FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

This element describes the facility requirements for the Cochise County Airport that are needed to satisfy anticipated aviation demand through the year 2017. Airport facility requirements are determined from information derived in the forecast analysis and from FAA criteria for design of airport components. The analysis yields estimates of required "airfield" improvements such as runways, taxiways, navigational aids, marking and lighting; and "landside" improvements, such as hangars, terminal buildings, aircraft parking aprons, fueling facilities, vehicle parking spaces, and airport access requirements.

The results of the facility requirements show a need for improvements to the parallel taxiway to Runway 03-21 and the need for additional wind coverage to meet FAA established goals. This will be met by re-opening Runway 14-32 for use by small single engine piston aircraft only. The length of Runway 03-21 has been found to match the length needed for the types of aircraft that would consistently operate at Cochise County. Also necessary is the continued maintenance of all existing pavements including the terminal apron, primary Runway 03-21, and hangar access taxilanes. Landside improvements (those that are accessed from the non-airfield portion of the airport) include remodeling the terminal with ADA improvements, additional hangar facilities, better directional signage to the airport, replacing the fuel facility, and establishing a "Fly and Camp" area to help boost additional tourist visits by flying patrons.

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### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF COCHISE COUNTY AIRPORT

As part of the Master Plan several Federal and State agencies were contacted about the proposed construction projects, the impacts on surrounding land use, and impacts of the old fueling system now in use at the airport. All the construction projects at the airport are categorically excluded from environmental concerns. This means the airport has been in use for a period of time that no additional environmental impacts will be incurred by any proposed development. However, on the existing site, the Corps of Engineers did note that some hydric soils (which are often associated with wetlands) were known to be on airport property and additional study would be necessary to develop the ground in these potential wetland areas. The location of these areas is shown on the Airport Layout Plan. Land use concerns have been closely coordinated with County Staff in making sure no incompatible uses are near the airport. Noise will not be a land use issue because the total amount of operations by the typical types and sizes of aircraft using Cochise County Airport are not sufficient enough to produce a noise impact as defined by FAA. The fuel tanks currently do not meet EPA requirements but are slated for removal and replacement in accordance with new EPA regulations. All impacts categories as defined by FAA have been identified and directly dealt with in regard to airport improvements.

### AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN

The graphic depiction of the proposed project is called the Airport Layout Plan. The complete site for Cochise County Airport is at the end of Chapter Seven. The ALP shows the current location of runways, taxiways, buildings, roads, apron, and the location of all improvements that could occur in the future at the airport.

### FINANCIAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The final chapter of the Master Plan discusses sources of funding for airport improvements and the agencies involved. Also included is a discussion of airport fees and what are standard rates to charge for development of private hangars. A summary of the revenues and expenses is included in tabular form at the end of Chapter Eight.

### CONCLUSION

The Cochise County Airport is a community service facility whose primary users are needing access to the City of Willcox and surrounding attractions. Its location in the north central portion of the county allows for a large service area from which to draw visitors and aircraft. Maintenance and improvement of the facilities will need to take place at the airport if it is to meet the demand for aviation services in the region. The Master Plan tells in narrative and graphic form when and where the improvements should occur and how the decisions were made.

# COCHISE COUNTY AIRPORT

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## Airport Master Plan

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